

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 159
By Rowland

A RESOLUTION to designate April 4, 2003, as "Dead Sea
Scrolls Day" in Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should designate April 4, 2003, as
"Dead Sea Scrolls Day" in Tennessee in recognition of the opening of the "From the Dead Sea
Scrolls to the Forbidden Book" exhibit at the Murfreesboro Center for the Arts in Rutherford
County; and

WHEREAS, more than a dozen fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls, ancient scrolls
containing Biblical texts, numerous religious relics and artifacts, and other antiquities will be on
display at the Murfreesboro Center for the Arts from April 6 – 29, 2003; over 50,000 visitors are
expected to view this remarkable exhibit; and

WHEREAS, the Dead Sea Scrolls, considered to be among the most important
archaeological finds of the twentieth century, were discovered shortly after World War II by an
Arab herdsman, who turned them over to a wealthy family; the Dead Sea Scrolls are now
making a tour of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the display will include the Paleo Leviticus, a Dead Sea Scroll fragment dated between 150 – 250 B.C.E., and the Marseah Papyrus, the oldest existing piece of Hebrew writing, dating from the seventh century B.C.E.; and

WHEREAS, as part of “From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Forbidden Book,” several remarkable Bibles will be on display, most notably, a page from the Gutenberg Bible, which was the first book ever printed with movable type, a thirteenth century Parisian Bible, which was one of the first Bibles to include chapter divisions, a 1569 Bear Bible, which was the first Bible to be printed in Spanish, and a Tyndale Bible, which was the first translation of the Bible from Greek into English; and

WHEREAS, the exhibit will also include a copy of the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible; named after a legend that holds that among the seventy monks who independently translated the text, no discrepancies were found, the production of the Septuagint marked the first time a culture translated another culture’s history into its own language; and

WHEREAS, the month-long event will commence on April 4 with an address by Oxford scholar David Danell, the world’s top authority on the English Reformation and early English Bibles, and will close on April 25-26 with a weekend Biblical symposium featuring Craig Lampe, an internationally known Bible scholar and curator of the world’s largest collection of antiquarian books and Bibles; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body would be remiss to let pass this momentous occasion without voicing our enthusiastic support for the display of this outstanding exhibit of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other antiquarian Biblical texts on Tennessee soil; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby designate April 4, 2003, as “Dead Sea Scrolls Day” in Tennessee to publicly highlight the historic nature of the “From the Dead Sea Scrolls to the Forbidden Book” exhibit at the Murfreesboro Center for the Arts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy